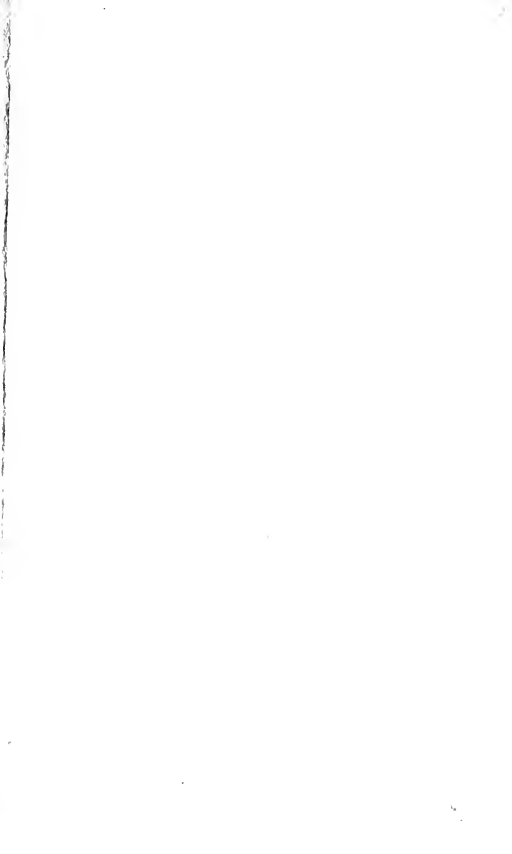


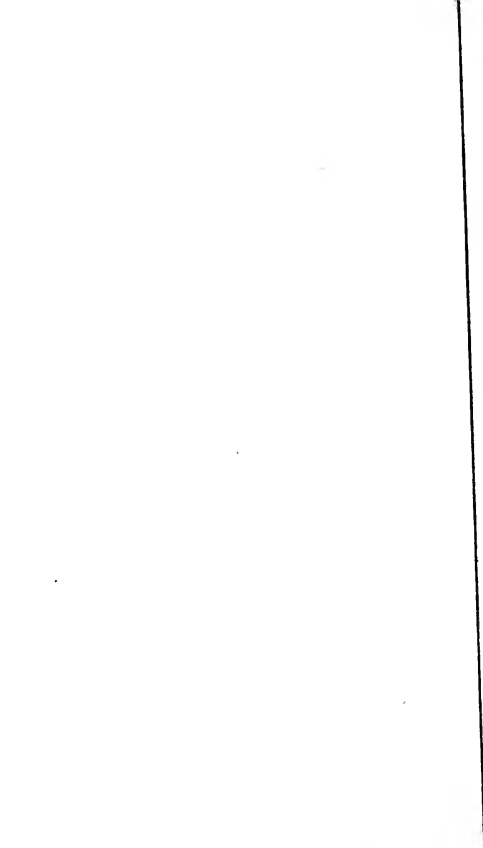
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JOHN

OR

OUR CHINESE RELATIONS

*A STUDY OF OUR EMIGRATION
AND COMMERCIAL INTERCOURSE WITH
THE CELESTIAL EMPIRE*

By THOMAS W. KNOX

AUTHOR OF "OVERLAND THROUGH ASIA" "BACKSHEESH"
"UNDERGROUND" ETC.



NEW YORK
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JOHN;

OR,

OUR CHINESE RELATIONS.

I.

EARLY INTERCOURSE WITH CHINA.

THE historian records that Arletta's pretty feet, twinkling in the brook, attracted the attention of the Duke of Normandy, and made her the mother of William the Conqueror. To the daughter of the tanner of Falaise we owe the Norman invasion of England, the establishment of constitutional government, the foundation and spread of the world-circling British empire. By a similar line of reasoning, we owe all that we possess to-day, as a nation, to the moon-eyed Celestials who a century ago cultivated the tea-plant on the sloping hill-

sides of antipodal China. From China came tea; from tea came the odious tea-tax which was levied by England upon her American colonies; from the tea-tax came the historic "Boston Tea-party;" from the Boston Tea-party and other defiant incidents came the war of the Revolution; from the war came our independence; from our independence came the present greatness and glory of the nation known as the United States. If the eagle on our national coat of arms should desire a resting-place for his feet, a tea-chest might form a pedestal not altogether inappropriate.

Down to the time of the Revolution, nearly all cargoes of tea destined for the American colonies were brought by way of England. The prohibition of direct importation was an important factor in our troubles with the mother-country, particularly as the indirect transit compelled the payment of a heavy tax. After the war we could import as we chose; the trade was carried on in English ships, and it was not

until 1786 that a vessel flying the American flag sailed from American shores for China. Salem was her port of departure, and she was the pioneer in a commerce that subsequently assumed enormous proportions, and made fortunes for hundreds of merchants in "the Chinese trade." The experiment succeeded, and the venture was rapidly followed by others, so that early in the present century we had a considerable business with China. Salem was the first in the field, then came Boston, and later it was entered by New York. Who hears of Salem now as a centre of foreign trade? Her commerce is gone, and has left few vestiges beyond the fortunes which still remain in some of her families, and the spacious dwellings and warehouses erected in the early days. To-day Salem is a peaceful, prosperous town of Massachusetts, with none of the characteristics of a bustling entrepôt or crowded mart. Long before her ships went to China she obtained an uncomfortable notoriety for her connec-

tion with uncanny matters; and the Salem witchcraft bids fair to be remembered in history when Salem commerce is forgotten. "The evil that men do lives after them; the good is oft interred with their bones."

Wonderful were the stories which the captains and sailors told on their return from the East, in the early days of the China trade. The fictions of the old chronicles were not altogether out of fashion, and their traces, as the chemists would say, are found at the present time in some of the traveller's tales that are told. Sir John Mandeville seems to have left his mantle lying around loose somewhere, and many of those who follow in his footsteps have tried it on. This veracious old chronicler visited the East more than five hundred years ago, and on his return he wrote an account of his travels, for the reason, as he says in his preface, "that if my memory should be found defective, other noble and worthy men may redress and amend it." In speaking of Chi-

na, which was then known as Cathay, he says, "The greatest river of fresh water in the world is in that country, and where it is narrowest it is more than four miles broad; it goes through the land of pygmies, where the people are small, being only three spans long. They are frequently at war with the birds of the country, which they kill and eat, and sometimes the birds kill and eat them. In the palace of the emperor all the dishes used upon the table are of precious stones, either of jasper, or of crystal, or of fine gold. Vessels of silver are unknown, for they set no value on that metal, but they make of it steps and pillars and pavements to halls and rooms." He says that in India diamonds grow upon rocks in the sea and in the mines; "they grow two together of opposite sexes, and I have often," he says, "tried the experiment of raising young diamonds from a pair of old ones, just as one in this country might raise lambs from a pair of sheep."

We pause a moment to take breath.

Peace to the ashes of this champion of conspicuous inaccuracy !

There are little grains of truth in this story of Sir John Mandeville. When he says that silver was used for steps and pillars for halls and rooms he was not absolutely wrong, as that metal was thus employed in olden time in the construction of certain parts of the imperial palace. In some of the guild-halls in the Chinese cities to-day the ceiling is of silver, and a good many statues and other ornaments are of that valuable metal. But the Chinese are a practical people, and every century and decade they are more and more using bronze in place of silver for purely ornamental work. China absorbs annually a large amount of silver, and the balance of trade is so much in her favor that she has no difficulty in finding all she wants. The reference to the greatest river of fresh water in the world is doubtless to the Yang-Tse ; and, when Sir John was writing, the Yang-Tse was certainly the largest known

stream on the globe. America was undiscovered, and consequently Europe knew nothing of the Amazon and the Mississippi.

A wise man once declared that it was an excellent provision of Providence to make great rivers run by large cities; he might have mentioned another curiosity of nature, that the cities at the mouths of great rivers are generally seaports. The rivers and seaports of China have been very useful to commerce and greatly facilitated the work of extending trade to foreign countries. The Yang-Tse, the great river of Far Cathay, has proved a magnificent water-way, and enabled the foreigner to carry his flag into the heart of the empire. American and English steamers stem its muddy current, and find it without a rival save in the western hemisphere. It was my fortune to ascend it six hundred miles from the sea; at that point it was like the Mississippi at Memphis or Cairo, and I know of no other stream in the world which can begin to rival it in the volume of its commerce. To

pass a fleet of boats was an hourly occurrence for our steamer, and sometimes even more frequent than this. At all the cities there were long rows of these craft tied to the banks; and at Hankow, the present head of steam navigation, I think I am safe in saying there were thousands of boats, and the most of them were of no diminutive size. I know of nothing better than a voyage on the Yang-Tse to impress a stranger with the great commercial importance of China.

Down to the early part of this century, and later, China had maintained a position of comparative exclusiveness. With the exception of Canton, her ports were closed to the rest of the world, and even at that famous city the traffic was confined to a locality outside the municipal limits. The foreign merchants lived there, and thither went the Chinese merchants to exchange tea and silks for such produce of other lands as was useful to their countrymen. The balance of trade was largely in favor

of China, and this balance was paid in silver, to the delight of John and the proportionate disgust of the foreigner.

In course of time a way was found for equalizing the balance by means of opium, which was raised in enormous quantities in India. The Chinese were great consumers of the drug, and the English in India were great producers; nothing was more natural than that the producer should attempt to supply the consumer. Chinese laws stood in the way, as the government had prohibited the importation of the drug which was killing many thousands of its people annually, and bringing sorrow and degradation to families all over the land. Though famous for their respect for laws at home, the English have little regard for those of other lands when they stand in the way of English commerce. India was a ruinous expense unless a market could be found for her opium. An English merchant in Hong-Kong said to me on this subject: "It was absolutely necessary to

open the Chinese market to save India from ruin, and we could not possibly allow the Chinese to refuse." One is reminded of the country boy who was trying with a hoe to dig a woodchuck from a ledge of rocks. When told that it was impossible to accomplish his purpose with that implement, he replied: "'Tain't no use talking; I must dig him out, for there ain't no meat in the house."

Opium-smuggling became a regular and honest employment among Englishmen, and not infrequently there were Americans with a hand in the business. The history of this curious phase of commerce would fill many a volume, as it extended over a considerable period, and covered amounts of an enormous aggregate. The boldness of the smugglers and the magnitude of their operations caused many remonstrances on the part of the Chinese government, and finally led to the seizure of a large quantity of opium and its subsequent destruction.

Out of this affair grew the famous (or infamous) "Opium War," in which China was

humbled, compelled to pay heavy damages, open other ports than Canton, and cede the island of Hong-Kong to England. The latter made Hong-Kong a free port, and since its settlement it has prospered commercially, less to the advantage of China than to the country that owns it. The Chinese authorities pronounce it a nest of smugglers, and declare that but for Hong-Kong the customs dues of the empire would be increased by many thousand pounds every year. This is undoubtedly true ; but, in justice to Hong-Kong, it should be stated that the smuggling is performed by the Chinese, and not by the English. The junks and other craft go to Hong-Kong, where they buy and receive their cargoes ; then, at a favorable opportunity, they run to the mainland, often by connivance of their own officials, and land their goods at obscure points. The craft are owned and manned by Chinese, and the goods are under the same proprietorship. Sometimes a junk may have a Portuguese captain, but rarely indeed is she commanded by an Englishman.

II.

TREATY-MAKING.

THE Opium War was followed by other wars, and notably those of 1858 and 1860. The United States had a little hand in these matters, and we all know about Commodore Tatnall going to the relief of the British fleet at the Peiho, with the remark, which has since gained a world-wide fame, "Blood is thicker than water." Out of the various wars grew the English, French, Russian, and American treaties with China—treaties whose signature was virtually made at the cannon's mouth. An English artist once made a caricature of this treaty-making business, in which he represented a Chinaman affixing his signature to a document, while over him stood persons representing each of the above-named powers; the four were holding pistols at the head of the un-

fortunate Celestial, and behind him were the muzzle of a cannon and a whole armful of bayonets. The picture was entitled "A Voluntary Act—China wishes to become one in the family of nations."

The terms of the treaty between Great Britain and China permitted the subjects of her Majesty the Queen of England to trade in China and to reside there, and it gave in return full permission for the subjects of his Majesty the Emperor of China to trade and reside in the British dominions everywhere. Many had already gone there, and also to California, and their action was fully legalized by the treaty. The treaties with the other powers were substantially the same. I was told in China that the clause permitting the Chinese to go to other countries was not asked for, or even suggested, by the Chinese ambassador, but was inserted by the English envoy, and afterwards by the representatives of other powers, merely to make an appearance of fairness, and to round up a paragraph.

I do not vouch for the truth of the above, as it came to me on hearsay evidence only, and I do not know any way of confirming or disproving it. Be that as it may, the treaty as a whole was forced upon China quite in the manner depicted by the artist, and was no doubt as difficult for her to swallow as had been the opium pills hitherto crowded down her throat. And it is in consequence of that very treaty and its operations that the people of the Pacific-coast States are now complaining of the hordes of Chinese on their soil, praying their authorities to remove the incubus of cheap labor, and occasionally rising into open defiance of law and order.

There is no use in denying that we are in an awkward position in the matter. Our case is like that of a man who entered an Arkansas village and declared that he "was spoiling for a fight." He roamed up and down the street, and at last found a villager who was willing to have a brush with him for the sake of better acquaintance.

Half an hour later the stranger limped from the village much battered as to visage, rent and soiled as to garments, and lisping through the crevices of his freshly broken teeth, "Seems to me I was a leetle too peart with my tongue, and can't blame that villager for licking of me."

For a period whose limits one cannot define with exactness, the so-called "Chinese question" has been a theme of importance. It is not by any means confined to the United States; in Australia and other British possessions, in South America, in Java, and in Japan even, the advent of John has led to discussions interminable, and promises to lead to interminable discussions more. The coming of the industrious and frugal Chinaman has troubled many lands and people, and caused a derangement of the system of local labor to an extent which many persons consider alarming. Prohibitory laws have been passed in some instances, and heavy taxes levied in the hope of restraining the immigration; the taxes

are paid and the immigration goes on, perhaps in less degree, but certainly it has been in no instance altogether suspended.

In California and Australia the people have defied law and risen in open violence against the obnoxious race. The mobs have been suppressed, but not without loss of life. In some of the conflicts between the races, John has shown that he can "strike back," and all the injury to life and limb has not been on the side of the party attacked. The growing frequency of these disturbances calls for an earnest intervention of the strong arm of the government, and an intervention in a twofold sense. The condition of the labor market in California and the temper of the great majority of the people demand a check to the immigration of Chinese. The rights guaranteed to every man dwelling beneath our flag require that government should protect all who have violated no law and are rightfully and properly on our soil.

Most of the treaties have been revised,

but only in some of their minor points; the trade and emigration clause remains unchanged, and Chinese are at liberty to go to other countries, just as the subjects or citizens of those countries have a right to go to China. It is upon this point that a change is needed; and when the treaties next come up for revision, it will doubtless be brought under consideration. It has been frequently discussed by the foreign ambassadors and the Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs, and its importance is conceded by all. The Chinese expressed a willingness to revise the treaty and recall all their subjects, but what they will demand in return it is difficult to say. They see the dilemma in which the treaty powers are placed, and it is quite likely they will make the most of the situation, and secure important advantages for themselves. There is no doubt they would be glad to return to something like their former isolation, and, above all, to send the foreigner, bag and baggage, out of their country.

From all I have heard, both from natives and foreigners, I am sure they would willingly tear up their treaties with us, recall their own people from other lands, and permit no more emigration, and pay every foreigner now living in China the full value of his property there, and give him free passage to his home. Of course there are many exceptions, but it may be set down as a rule that the Chinese detest the foreigner, and only tolerate him because they must. The feeling pervades all classes of the people, and not only the people, but the lower animals. Chinese ponies snort and start when you come near them, the dogs bark at you, the cats snarl and flee with enlarged tails and elevated back-hair, and even the meek and ruminant cow takes a shy at you with her horns.

On this latter point I could relate a harrowing tale of how a friend and myself were pursued by an infuriated cow in a Chinese city, and how she would not be turned from her purpose, but kept after us for some ten

minutes or more. My friend ran swiftly, and kept a little ahead of the beast; of course I wouldn't be so undignified as to run from a cow, but I managed to keep at the side of my fleet friend, and came out a trifle in advance of him. We furnished free amusement to a crowd of Chinese, who looked and laughed, thinking it was capital fun to see a couple of barbarians pursued by a Chinese cow, and never stopping to consider how the barbarians might like it. But the tables are turned, and more than turned, in San Francisco and Melbourne, where the white man has a great deal of sport at Chinese expense. In each of those cities it is not unusual to see a large dog pursuing a frightened Celestial, amid the jeers of a group of voters who have set the brute to his work.

There are those who fear that the Chinese, unless restrained, will overrun America, take control of the labor market, and ultimately secure the monopoly of many branches of commercial enterprise. Some

of these are alarmists, and see great calamities in the immediate future, and some are demagogues, who talk what they do not believe, because it is for their political interest to do so. But there are others who judge the future by the past, and have given careful study to the question; they believe that the present evil will go on increasing steadily, but not rapidly; and while there is no immediate danger to be feared, it is well to consider the distant future.

Estimating the number of Chinese in the United States at a quarter of a million, and our whole population at a round forty millions, we can see no immediate danger to our prosperity or safety. Our annual increase is quite as great as any Chinese immigration in its most flourishing period, and there is little probability that their numerical proportions will be larger than at present. As is well known, not one emigrant in a thousand brings his family. The American consul at Hong-Kong informed me that while nearly twenty-five thousand Chinese

men went from that port to San Francisco in one year, there were less than two hundred women, and this has been about the proportion ever since the emigration began. Of Chinese children born in America there are barely sufficient to fill an ordinary church, and certainly we must be timid indeed if we have fears of these.

Dry up the source, and the stream will disappear in time. We have only to revise our treaties so as to prevent the advent of new immigrants, and leave the matter of the return of those now in America quite out of consideration. *Tempus edax rerum* will steadily reduce the number of those who stay, and by the beginning of the coming century less than half the present number will be alive. Another twenty-five years will make still further havoc, and long before the celebration of our second centennial the last Chinese among us will have gone to his grave, and left us a free and happy people.

III.

ANGLO-CHINESE LANGUAGE.

To our commercial intercourse with China we are indebted for the invention of modern times known as "pigeon English." In attempting to pronounce the word "business," the Chinese were formerly unable to get nearer to the real sound than "pidgin" or "pigeon;" hence the adoption of that word, which means nothing more nor less than "business." Pigeon English is therefore business English, and is the language of commerce at the open ports of China, or wherever else the native and foreigner come in contact. A pigeon French has made its appearance in Saigon and at other places, and is steadily increasing as French commerce has increased. On the frontier line between Russia and China there is an important trading-point—Kiachta—where the

commerce of the two empires was exclusively conducted for a century and a half. In 1866 I visited Kiachta, and found that a pigeon Russian existed there, and was the medium of commercial transactions between the Russian and Chinese merchants. Long ago the Portuguese at Macao had a corresponding jargon for their intercourse with the Chinese; and it may be safely stated that wherever the Chinese have established permanent relations with any country, a language of trade has immediately sprung into existence, and is developed as time rolls on and its necessities multiply.

The decline in Portuguese trade with China was accompanied with a corresponding decline in the language, but it left its impress upon the more recent pigeon English, which contains many Portuguese words. Pigeon English is a language by itself, with very little inflection either in noun, pronoun, or verb, and with a few words doing duty for many. The Chinese learn it readily, as they have no grammati-

cal giants to wrestle with in mastering it, and the foreigners are quite ready to meet them on the road and adapt their phraseology to its requirements. The Chinese has only to commit to memory a few hundred words and know their meaning; the foreigner (if he be English-speaking) has less than a hundred foreign words to learn, together with the peculiar construction of phrases. The Chinese have printed vocabularies in which the foreign word and its meaning are set forth in Chinese characters, and thus they have no occasion to trouble themselves with the alphabet of the stranger. These books are specially intended for the use of *compradores* and servants in foreign employ, and are so small that they can be readily carried in the pocket. It is not unusual to see a servant occupying his spare moments in studying one of these volumes, and I remember a boy that waited on me in Shanghai who used to whip out his book and catch the intervals between the various courses of my dinner. When I

called for anything, the book disappeared, as if by magic, in the folds of his capacious sleeve; and the instant my wants were supplied he resumed his studies. Daily I could perceive progress in his lingual accomplishments, and before the end of a fortnight he was ready to graduate with high honor. I fear his honesty was not equal to his proficiency, as I found that my handkerchiefs disappeared mysteriously while I was in his care, and the confusion of tongues under which he labored caused him to mistake two of my silver dollars for his own. I hope he used them properly, and did not waste them in riotous living.

In pigeon English the pronouns *he*, *she*, *it*, and *they* are generally expressed by the single pronoun *he*. All the forms of the first person are included in *my*, and those of the second person in *you*. When we come to the verbs, we find that action, intention, existence, and kindred conditions are covered by *hab*, *belongey*, and *can do*. Various forms of possession are expressed by

catchee (catch), while *can do* is particularly applied to ability or power, and is also used to imply affirmation or negation. Thus: "Can do walkee?" means "Are you able to walk?" If so, the response would be "can do," while "no can do" would imply inability to indulge in pedestrianism. *Belongey* comes from "belong," and is often shortened to a single syllable, *b'long*. It is very much employed, owing to the many shades of meaning of which it is capable. Thus: "I live in Hong-Kong" would be rendered "My belongey Hong-Kong side," and "You are very large" would be properly translated "You belongey too muchee big piecee." One day on a steamer, a servant brought me the captain's invitation to join him in the examination of a bottle of wine in the cabin. The message was thus delivered: "He captain bottom-side talkee you b'longey chop-chop dlinko one piecee winee." The nearest literal rendering of the above would be, "The captain is below, and says you are to come immediately to drink one piece

(glass) of wine." I replied, "Can do," and the dialogue ended.

The Chinese find great difficulty in pronouncing *r*, which they almost invariably convert into *l*. They have a tendency to add a vowel sound (*o* or *e*) to words ending with a consonant. Bearing these points in mind, we readily see how "drink" becomes *dlinko*, and "brown" *blownee*. Final *d* and *t* are awkward for them to handle, and *th* is to their lips an abomination of first-class dimensions. "Child" becomes *chilo*, and "cold" is transformed to *colo*, in pigeon English. "That," and other words beginning with *th*, generally lose the sound of *h*, though sometimes they retain *h* and drop the *t* before it. Thus in the preceding paragraph "he captain" means "the captain," and this form of speaking is frequently encountered. "Side" is used for position, and the vocabulary contains *inside*, *outside*, *bottom-side* (below), and *top-side* (above). *Chop-chop* means "fast," "quick," "immediately;" *man-man* means "slowly,"

“slower,” “gently,” in the south of China ; while at Hankow, on the Yang-Tse, it means exactly the reverse. At Canton or Swatow, if you say *man-man* to your boatmen, they will cease rowing or will proceed very lightly ; say the same thing to your boatmen at Hankow or Ichang, and they will pull away with redoubled energy.

The author of the Breitman ballads has made an interesting little volume entitled “Pidgin-English Sing-Song.” When I entered a bookstore in Shanghai and asked for a vocabulary of Chinese, Mr. Leland’s book was handed to me, with the remark that it was the best thing of the kind in existence. The bright-witted Hans has made a series of short poems, stories, and the like in the quaint jargon of the East, together with a quantity of proverbs more or less familiar to Occidentals. As an illustration of the language, I will quote a few of the “wise saws and modern instances :”

“Who man swim best, t’hat man most gettee dlown ;
Who lidee best he most catch tumble down.”

“One piecee blind man healee best, maskee ;
One piecee deaf man makee best look-see.”

“One man who never leedee,
Like one dly inkstand be ;
You turn he top-side downey,
No ink lun outside he.”

“Suppose one man much bad—how bad he be,
One not’her bad man may be flaid of he.”

One day I ventured to put a well-known rhyme into pigeon English, adhering as closely as possible to the construction of the language, and preserving, at the same time, the measure of the verse. The following is the result :

MALY AND HE LITTEE LAMB.

Maly hab one piecee lamb,
He wool all same he snow.
What time he Maly b’long one side,
T’hat lamb make all same go.

One time he Maly b’longey school,
And b’longey school t’hat lamb.
Larn-pidgin chilos bobbely make
Like poundee on tam-tam.

He massa wantchee lamb go home ;
T’hat lamb he no can do.

. Bimeby he Maly go outside,
And findee lamb there too.

Time Maly come t'hat piecee lamb,
He lun on Maly side,
All same chin-chin, "you my good flin,
What man say no, he lied."

"What for he lamb t'hat muchee flin?"
He littee chilos cly.

"That Maly makee muchee flin,"
He massa talkee, hi !

The rapid spread of this language in the last twenty years, by reason of the large emigration of the Chinese to other lands, renders it worthy of serious consideration. One writer predicts that the time is not far distant when it will be necessary to render the Bible into pigeon English, and another says that if English is to become the cosmopolitan language of commerce, it will have to borrow from the Chinese as much monosyllable and as little inflection as possible. A grammar of English for the use of Orientals has been projected in which the plurals of nouns and the past tenses of verbs should be regular, and the auxiliaries and all other perplexities of our language reduced to the minimum. According to

this plan, the plural of "sheep" would be *sheeps*; of "mouse," *mouses*; and that of "man," *mans*. Among the verbs we should have *go-ed* in place of "went," and *com-ed* in place of "came." The proposition will doubtless develop a smile on the face of the reader, but it certainly contains matter for serious consideration.

Comparatively few of the foreign residents of China take the trouble to learn the language of the country, but content themselves with the use of pigeon English in their transactions with the natives. In Shanghai I asked a merchant who had been twelve years in that city the names of the Chinese numerals from one to ten. "I don't know," was his reply; "I never bothered myself to learn, as I can get along well enough in pigeon English." I did not expect him to be able to speak Chinese, but I certainly thought he should be able to count in that tongue.

Many of the foreigners in the Far East use occasional native words in conversation

among themselves. This custom is not confined to China and Japan, but prevails in Siam, Java, India, Ceylon, and, in fact, in pretty nearly every country I have visited. "Maskee; come in," said an American merchant in Yokohama, to whom I was excusing myself from entering his office by reason of the muddiness of my boots. (*Maskee* means "never mind.") "Come to tiffin to-morrow at twelve," said the same gentleman—*tiffin* being the word which means "lunch" or "mid-day meal." It is printed on the bills of fare in the hotels, and is written or spoken twenty times where "lunch" is used once. *Cumshaw* means "gift" or "bribe;" *sampan* is a "boat," and *coolie* is a "laborer." All these words and many others have fairly driven their English equivalents quite out of sight, or into a retirement from which they rarely emerge. Some of the words and phrases in our language come from the Orient: *cash*, denoting money, is purely Chinese, it being the name of the smallest copper coin in the land of the Celestials.

“My no catchee cash, my no can play fan-tan.” *Fan-tan* is a Chinese game of chance; and as the gambler of every country generally insists upon ready money from the wooers of the fickle goddess, the meaning of the rest of the sentence is obvious. We frequently hear a New York or Boston shopkeeper pronounce his goods “first chop,” and he probably does so without thinking that he is using Chinese. Chop means label, stamp, or inscription, and first chop is the superlative of excellence and good quality. The Chinese vocabulary is invading ours, just as the people of the Flowery Kingdom are invading the United States and the English colonies. Is not this a phase of the Oriental question which demands our attention?

IV.

THE COMPRADOR.

THE progress of the Chinese in the United States in the way of business and commercial matters in general (not including ordinary labor) is not as rapid as it has been in the Far East. When the ports of the empire were opened, and for years afterwards, business was in European* hands, and the Chinese merchant had little to do with it. The foreigner found it convenient to employ a Chinese to transact his business with the natives, and in time the convenience became a necessity. The person thus employed was (and is) called a *comprador*, the name being

* By the term "European" are included all foreigners, whether from Europe or America. Japanese, East Indians, Malays, and the like are usually grouped as "Asiatics;" persons born in Asia of mixed parentage are called "Eurasians," the name being formed from the two words Europe and Asia.

borrowed from the Portuguese ; and so important did the comprador become that the merchant could not get along without him. He bought the tea, silk, porcelain, and other goods that were wanted for export, and he sold all the imported articles, whether their value was great or small ; he managed the insurances and shipments ; he employed all the servants about the establishment, and was responsible for their honesty ; he kept the bank account ; in fact, he did so much that the wonder is the merchant could find anything at all to lay his hand to.

John Comprador was invariably a shrewd, clear-headed native, and watched his master's interest with a careful eye. That he looked out for his own as well is not to be wondered at, and it is pretty certain that he generally did. He had certain legitimate "squeezes" on nearly everything he did ; he had a commission on the servants he employed, on the provisions he bought, and on all the other general expenses of the house. One can see with half a glance

what a chance he had in transactions with the native merchants. A thousand chests of tea or as many packages of silk could pay him ever so small a squeeze, and the aggregate would be a good addition to his regular wages. The comprador was earnest, active, and frugal, and by strict attention to business and rigid economy he could save five or ten thousand dollars a year out of an income of one thousand. Nobody cared if he did, as he was worth the money; he saved a deal of trouble and exertion on the part of the foreigner, and these are no joke in a country where, for a large part of the year, the operation of winking your right eye will throw you into a perspiration.

At first a great convenience, the comprador soon became a necessity. Merchants began to think they were putting too much in the hands of the native, and some of them tried to do without him. Vain hope! He was an Old Man of the Sea whom they could not shake off. Probably there are no people in the world who understand the system of

guilds and trades-unions better than the Chinese. They make combinations quite surpassing any of European or American origin, and the combinations hold together with iron tenacity.

Had the foreign merchants begun originally to deal directly with the natives, they might have done so to this day; but having once adopted the comprador, he became a link in the chain of guilds and unions, and could not be set aside. Suppose I am in business in Shanghai, and determine to do without a comprador and attend to my own purchases. I go to a native merchant and ask for his tea samples; he shows them, and I ask the price of a thousand chests. "No have got," is the reply, "no can catchee." I go to another, and another, with the same result; not one has a pound of tea to sell to *me*. The guild has ordered it; and until I deal through a comprador I can do nothing in tea, or silk, or wax, or any other Chinese product. Let me send my comprador, I get the market quotations

at once. So it goes with all that one buys or sells in Chinese ports, and so it goes with nearly all dealings with Chinese merchants. Their guilds are the most comprehensive and most perfect in their operations of all I have seen in any part of the world.

It is interesting (and pitiful too) to see how completely the merchant in Far Cathay is in the hands of the comprador. Go into any large house at Shanghai or Hong-Kong and ask any question concerning the market; the chances are twenty to one that the person you address will turn to the comprador and repeat the inquiry. The comprador's answer is final, and no one ever appeals from it—at least I have never known an appeal. If you have a draft to cash, it is the comprador who determines the rate of exchange and counts out the money; in the latter act he is assisted by another personage, known as a "shroff." The currency of the East is the Mexican dollar, and it has been so extensively counterfeited that great

care is necessary to distinguish the genuine from the imitation.

Here, again, the foreign merchants have left the matter to the native; it is the latter who settles the matter, and by whom every dollar is handled. The class of employés known as "shroffs" are found in every banking establishment and every commercial house of any importance. In the smaller houses the comprador combines the duties of shroff with his own, but in the larger concerns he does not do so. The shroff is an autocrat by whose side the Emperor of Russia pales to insignificance. His word is absolutism in the extreme; and if you venture to doubt it, his glance is more withering than the breath of the upas-tree.

One day I drew some money from a leading house on which I had a letter of credit, and the amount was paid to me in Mexicans. I took my bag of dollars to my hotel, and locked it in my trunk; and a few days later, wishing to obtain some notes of the Hong-

Kong and Shanghai Bank, I proceeded with the bag aforesaid to that establishment. I stated my wants, and the shroff was called to count my dollars. He rejected about ten per cent. of the coins; and on my expostulating, and saying that I received them from Blank & Co., and was sure they were all right, he turned on me a look that would have appalled a royal Bengal tiger. I felt my heart sink in my boots, and would fain have crept under a walnut shell had there been one handy. Not a word did he utter, but his contemptuous look and equally contemptuous wave of the hand spoke a couple of folio volumes (calf-bound) at least. Verdantly I appealed to the meek foreigner to whom I had addressed myself at first; he spoke not, but shook his head to the extent of a small octavo, which said, "The shroff is king here, and I am nothing." Angrily I gathered up my money, swept it into the bag, rejected the notes which had been counted for me, and walked out of the place. Then they knew me for a novice. A year's

residence in the country would have taught me to bow to the decision of the shroff as to that of the Chief-justice of the Supreme Court of the land.

On my arrival in Shanghai, I found in my trunk—pity I can't do so daily!—an American gold piece of twenty dollars. I had a few purchases to make, and thought it a good opportunity to get rid of this stray coin. I bought some books, and tendered the piece. The party who served me was one of the proprietors, but he was dumb as to its value. "Comprador, how much is this worth?" said he to that functionary at the cash-box, and the reply was, "Eighteen forty." Eighteen dollars and forty cents in silver struck me as rather low for a twenty-dollar gold piece, and so I bagged the coin, paid in Mexicans, and went to the next shop I wished to patronize. There the same scene was enacted, with the difference that the response was, "Seventeen twenty." I suggested that I had just been offered eighteen forty, but neither comprador nor

clerk ventured a reply: the former would not, and the latter dared not.

In another shop I was offered nineteen ten, and in another nineteen thirty. I finally sold it for twenty dollars and twenty-five cents in silver, and had good opportunity to think of the possible and probable intentions of those compradores to squeeze that gold piece. Nineteen Thirty was not altogether unreasonable, but Mr. Seventeen Twenty was of exalted views, and doubtless had a family to support. And if one of them had offered me five dollars and a half for the coin, I have not the slightest doubt that his principal would have remained dumb as a sheep before him, and ventured not the slightest remonstrance. Go where you will, in all the great houses, banking or otherwise, of the open ports of China, you will find all the financial affairs of the concern in Chinese hands, and controlled by them in the most despotic manner.

V.

CHINESE PROGRESS IN COMMERCIAL
KNOWLEDGE.

THE result of this association of the foreigner and the Chinese in business has been not altogether to the advantage of the former. The Chinese has learned the lesson which the foreigner has unintentionally taught him, and learned it well. He has set up for himself, and, with his keenness and frugality, is proving more than a match for his instructor.

In all the Chinese ports there are Chinese banks, Chinese insurance companies, Chinese boards of trade, Chinese steamship companies, and other concerns, all in Chinese management and supported by Chinese capital. There are Chinese importers and exporters, and they have their agencies in London and Marseilles, San Francisco

and New York, so that they can transact any desired business without calling a middle man to their aid. Even where they have no direct agencies, the leading Chinese houses have established their credit with manufacturers in England and elsewhere, so that they can make their purchases side by side with a foreign competitor, and with the certainty of selling directly to the native jobber or retailer without risking the possible squeeze of the comprador.

Foreign commerce and foreign relations were forced upon China, and were a splendid thing for us at the start; the Chinese are taking their revenge now, and in a way quite unexpected to us, and which some of us pronounce unfair. The evil, if we may so call it, has grown to enormous proportions, and is growing every year.

The sugar trade of Amoy and Formosa has gone entirely into Chinese hands. It was formerly a source of handsome income to several foreign houses. Nearly all the flour from San Francisco to China is on Chi-

nese account; a foreigner might touch it with a ten-foot pole, perhaps, when the sacks are piled upon the dock, but it would be unsafe for him to touch it in any other way.

The rice trade between China and other countries is almost entirely in Chinese hands, and the chances are that the Celestials will have a monopoly of it within half a decade. The native merchant is satisfied with a very small profit, such as would not tempt a foreigner, and thus the foreigner is ousted. I know of one transaction—a shipment of flour from San Francisco to Hong-Kong—in which the net profit was exactly half a cent per sack, and the merchant was quite content. In another case a Chinese had bought twenty-five thousand dollars' worth of goods, and sold them next day for an advance of a hundred dollars. "My makee good pigeon allee same likee t'hat," he said in my hearing, and the twinkle of his eye showed that he was satisfied with the operation, and ready for another like it.

Year by year foreigners are retiring from China and Japan, some by the not unusual process of failure, and others by the slower but more desirable means of liquidation. Some go away in wrath and profanity, and vaguely say that there has been "overtrading in the East," and "the country has been bought out," while others frankly confess that the Chinese are too much for them. They cannot live on the wonderfully small profits which content the Chinese, and after making a thorough trial of business, they confess themselves worsted. Buyers will generally patronize the cheapest market, irrespective of nationality; and you may talk yourself hoarse about the necessity of supporting foreign trade and all that, but the chances are even you will buy of a Chinese because he will sell cheaper than a European.

In Yokohama I wanted some clothing suited to the climate, and proceeded, at the advice of a resident friend, to the shop of Quong Chang, tailor. Mr. Chang was polite

and ready for business; he showed me samples of his goods, and gave me his prices, and the latter were certainly reasonable. He offered to make me a complete suit—"no fittee no takee"—of blue serge for ten dollars. With a fragment of the cloth I went to a foreign tailor, who wanted seventeen dollars for the same article. Other prices were in proportion; and I need hardly say that Quong Chang was my tailor during my stay in Yokohama, and that he rang with the utmost caution every Mexican dollar I paid him, lest he might unwittingly take in a counterfeit.

Perhaps the cut of his clothing was not quite up to that of the foreigner, but the sewing was the same, as it was done in both cases by native workmen. But it required a sharp eye to distinguish the one from the other; and I have never seen reason to regret my patronage of the Celestial. The reason of the difference in price is easy to see. Quong Chang had a small shop, while Mr. Foreigner had a large one; Q. C. lived

on ten cents a day, while F. needed three or four dollars; Q. C. had his family in a single back-room, while F.'s family had a house to itself; Q. C. rode out on foot generally, while F. had a carriage with horse and groom; Q. C. was content with a living and a trifle beyond, while F. wanted to make a fortune in ten years and go home. If Quong could not make fifty cents profit on the transaction, he would put up with twenty-five, or even ten, while his competitor would not think the job worth touching unless it netted at least twenty-five per cent. on the amount of money handled.

I have thus detailed this matter, as it is a good illustration of the general competition between Chinese and foreigners in the East. In every instance the Chinese has the best of it, and there is no possible way to get ahead of him, or even to draw alongside. What with his guilds and the comprador drag on the foreigner, on the one hand, and his economic habits of life and the transaction of business, on the other,

John is entirely at ease, and his power is growing every day.

When the Chinese ports were first opened, the foreign trade went into English and American hands, but in a few years the Germans came in and took a large share of it. They could live and work cheaper than their competitors, and for a considerable while they flourished. But when the Chinese came to the front, all others suffered alike, as the new competitor could beat each and every one of them in the ability to get along with small profits. A Chinese official said one day to a friend of mine, "Englishman and Melican man come here makee big pigeon; bimeby long come German man eatee up Englishman and Melican man; Chinaman come now, he makee eat up German man; some time you makee see Chinaman eatee every ting." There is every reason to believe that his prediction will be fulfilled in the main; that the "eatee up" is going on pretty rapidly a great many persons can testify.

In Hong-Kong the Chinese houses are increasing annually, while the English and other foreign ones are decreasing. Rows of stores formerly occupied by English merchants have been given up to Chinese, and the number grows and grows with each recurring season. Nineteen twentieths of the population of Hong-Kong are Chinese, and there is not a branch of business into which they have not entered. They have shipping and commercial houses; steamship, banking, and insurance companies, as I have already mentioned; and you can buy in their shops nearly every article of foreign manufacture that you can buy in the English stores, and almost invariably at a lower price. The complete free trade established at Hong-Kong has been good for the English manufacturer, but not so for the English merchant who established himself in the colony.

So much for John on his own soil. Let us see what he has done in carrying the war into the enemy's country.

VI.

ESTABLISHMENT OF CHINESE MERCHANTS IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

WE are all pretty well aware of what they have done in California, and so I will not take up that branch of the subject. In all the open ports of Japan the Chinese are thickly established. Their competition is more with Europeans than with the Japanese, and they have succeeded in making a very large inroad into the profits of the foreigner, though less so than at Hong-Kong, Shanghai, or the other Chinese ports. Going west from Hong-Kong, we come to Cochin China, the French possession, of which Sai-gon is the capital. There the Chinese have been steadily cutting into the trade, until they have by far the best of it, and have driven some foreign houses out of business. During 1876 the Chinese shipped nine tenths of

the rice crop, amounting to nearly 6,000,000 piculs (133 pounds to the picul). All other articles of export were shipped by them, with a very few exceptions, and they have at least five sixths of the import trade. Much of the shipment is to Hong-Kong, and a great portion of it is in Chinese vessels, while many of the English ships find it expedient to employ Chinese agents.

The Hong-Kong agency of the only line of steamers running to Bang-kok, Siam, is Chinese; and when I purchased my ticket by one of the company's ships, I was obliged to apply to the head of the Yuen Fat Hong, and make my negotiations with him. The captain told me that all the rice carried by him or his companion vessels was on Chinese account; and I found on reaching Bang-kok a Chinese line of steamers running to Singapore. Foreign business at Bang-kok grows smaller each year, while Chinese business increases. The Celestial has much of the local trade in Bang-kok. I was told that the government licenses for

the sale of spirits were in the hands of a Chinese, while another had the monopoly of gambling-houses.

At Singapore there are more than 100,000 Chinese, one fourth as many Malays, and about 1000 Europeans. The Chinese have gained in numbers, while the Europeans have lost, in spite of the steadily increasing importance of Singapore. While I was there a quarrel arose between the Chinese and foreign merchants—or rather it was in progress when I arrived—concerning the delivery of pepper, gambier, and other articles of merchandise which the former sell to the latter. The disputed point was on a matter of delivery, the latter demanding and the former refusing to make delivery at the foreign go-downs (warehouses). The foreigners united, and agreed not to buy until the point was yielded to them; the Chinese united, and refused to sell except at their own go-downs.

See the advantage of a Chinese combination over a foreign one. When I left Singa-

pore two of the foreign houses had broken from the combination, and were buying pepper and gambier on the terms of the Chinese, while the latter were as firm as the rock of Gibraltar. I don't know who won the fight, but I think it is not hard to guess, especially as there had been similar troubles before, in which the Chinese came out ahead. Certainly they are a most indefatigable lot of merchants, and it is really a wonder how so many of the natives of the Flowery Kingdom manage to make a living on the little island of Singapore. There is not much to choose in that city between the Chinese and the Malay. Deal with one and you will generally wish you had dealt with the other—or neither.

Java has not been extensively overrun by the Chinese, owing to certain restrictions that the Dutch have put upon their coming. The authorities claim the right to say who may or may not reside in Java, and not infrequently they put a negative on the advent of foreigners, not only of Chinese, but

of other nationalities. Nevertheless, there is a large number of them, and they are found in all parts of the island, as keenly alive to industry and profit as anywhere else. Many employments are almost or entirely in their hands; opium and liquor licenses are generally farmed out to Chinese contractors, and they rent and manage many of the rice, coffee, and other estates. When I wanted to hire a carriage for a journey into the interior, I was told that all such vehicles were in the hands of the Chinese, and the high price I was forced to pay found its way into a Celestial's pocket.

In Batavia and other ports of Java the Chinese are largely interested in commerce, and their monopoly of the rice trade is well-nigh complete. They import rice from Siam, Cochin China, and Burmah, as the rice crop of Java is not sufficient to meet the demand upon the island. Gradually they have extended the traffic until the local trade is completely in their hands; and if any outsider ventures to interfere with them, he is

severely punished. Some time ago a Batavian firm (not Chinese) thought it saw a chance for profit in rice, and accordingly imported a cargo from Siam. But, to the surprise of the speculators, they found they could not sell the rice at any figure; the guild of Chinese merchants had given the order, and nobody would purchase. It was held for several weeks, and finally sold at a slight loss, and you may be sure that the firm in question has been careful to keep out of rice since that transaction.

In the interior of Java you find many Chinese, and they seem to have come to stay. A goodly proportion have married and settled; and as Chinese wives are scarce, they have intermarried with the Javanese, just as in Siam they take to themselves Siamese wives. I was interested and amused at a road-side inn in Java, where I stopped for luncheon, to find a Chinese proprietor with a Javanese household. A couple of children of China-Javanese blood were running about the house, and a third was in

the arms of the buxom mother, who sat near the box where John kept his cash. She was one of the fair of the land, and appeared to look with respect and obedience upon her liege lord, who was not over handsome. I had been told that the Javanese (like the Siamese) women are quite fond of taking Chinese husbands, who are pretty sure to care for and support them, which is not always the case with their own countrymen.

In Manila, Penang, and Malacca the Chinese have established themselves quite as firmly as in Singapore and Java, particularly in Penang, where they leave comparatively little to the foreigner. At Moulmein and Rangoon, in Burmah, they are abundant and prosperous, and I could almost repeat word for word, in writing of their course in Rangoon, what I have written about Sai-gon. The chief export of Rangoon is rice, and a Chinese takes as naturally to the rice trade as a duck to water. He has taken to it in Rangoon, and taken it in—not so fully as in Sai-gon, since there is a large export to

England and India in English hands, but sufficiently to cause discontent to foreign traders. His control of the rice trade is yearly increasing, and he has steamship lines of his own, so that he is under obligations to nobody.

The British India Steam Navigation Company is an important concern, possessing many ships, and performing service over many routes. They have, among others, a line between Calcutta and Singapore, touching at Rangoon, Moulmein, Penang, and Malacca, and carrying the mails under a government contract. When they first began the service, they had a fine business in carrying freight, and not a ship went either way without a full cargo at remunerative rates. From Rangoon and the other way ports to Singapore, and from Singapore to Rangoon, the shippers were nearly all Chinese, as they had the lion's share of the business on that route.

But a change came over the spirit of the dream of the B. I. S. N. Company. They

had a couple of steamers which had become old and worn in the service, and they were astonished and delighted one day when some of the Chinese merchants offered to purchase the gamy ships aforesaid. The directors laughed as they received the money and transferred the vessels, and they laughed long and often when they thought how completely they had sold the Celestials in selling them the antiquated craft. The pigtailed merchants started a line between Rangoon and Singapore with their two steamers, and then the joke was complete. But in a very short time the freight list of the English company declined, and each month it declined more and more.

The new line had all the business; its managers sent to London and bought some new steamers; it extended its service to the coast of Sumatra, and received therefor a subsidy from the government of the Netherlands Indies; and it has gone on prospering and prosperous ever since. The British India Company runs its steamers

with the lightest cargoes, and sometimes none at all, and but for its mail contract it would withdraw altogether from that particular service. Its directors laugh no more at the verdancy of the Chinese in buying that pair of venerable steamers, and are inclined to avoid the subject.

Westward beyond Burmah the Chinese have not penetrated in great numbers, but they are far from unknown. They are in Ceylon, and in Calcutta, Bombay, and other cities of British India, and some of them have strayed to London and a few of the Continental cities. In Calcutta and Bombay they have a monopoly of the manufacture of bamboo chairs and baskets, and many of them have set up as tailors, boot-makers, and the like, to the disgust of their competitors. Thus far the Chinese question has no importance in India; but if we may judge of that country by others where the Celestials have taken foothold, its discussion in the land of the Vedas and Shastas cannot be long delayed.

VII.

STATISTICS OF CHINESE TRADE.

CHINA has been a trading nation considerably against her will, and nearly every concession relative to foreign commerce has been forced from her at the cannon's mouth. China was once the only producer of tea in the world. Other nations wanted her tea and sent ships there to get it. Her silk was also in demand, and brought a high price, and her porcelain wares and ivory carvings were unrivalled. The other nations had very little that was wanted in China, and consequently nearly all the purchases in the Celestial Empire were paid for with solid silver. For centuries there has been a steady stream of silver poured into China, and the end is not yet; Mexican and other dollars are melted into "sycee," and in this shape form a very inconvenient medium of

exchange. The model for a block of sycee silver is a woman's shoe; and as there is no national standard for the size of a Chinese woman's foot, the ingots vary in size, and necessitate the weighing of every lot of silver bought or sold. Each party to the transaction weighs the metal, and it sometimes happens that a difference in the weighing apparatus leads to a quarrel. A local poem thus describes this Oriental currency:

"Some ask me what the cause may be
That Chinese silver's called *sycee*.
But probably they call it so
Because they *sigh* to see it go."

I have elsewhere alluded to Kiachta, on the Mongolian frontier, which was founded in 1727 as an entrepôt of international commerce between Russia and China. Russia consumed a great deal of tea, and for a hundred and fifty years all the tea used in the Muscovite Empire was imported through Kiachta. Alarmed at the great drain of silver to pay for this tea, the Russian gov-

ernment, early in the present century, ordered that the importation of tea should be paid for "with articles of Russian manufacture," and not with coin. The wheels of commerce were blocked by this edict, but only for a short time. The merchants at the frontier were not slow to devise a means of keeping the word of promise to the ear and breaking it to the hope. The Russians cast their silver money into idols of varying sizes and weights; and as the material was of coin standard, the value was readily determined by weight. These idols were clearly "articles of Russian manufacture," and met the requirements of the law. The government again interfered, on the ground that a Christian nation should not lend itself to the encouragement of idolatry by making heathen images. Then the merchants adopted the shoe as the model for silver castings, and silver shoes for Chinese ladies were regular articles of commerce. But I doubt if a single one of these has ever served the actual purposes of a

shoe, and there is little probability that it ever will.

The value of China as a tea-producing country is declining, owing to the rivalry of other countries. Japan is a heavy exporter of tea, nearly all her product coming to the United States, and making a serious inroad upon the market. India began the tea-culture as an experiment, by which it was hoped to turn a large area of the hill-country to some useful purpose and bring a revenue to the government. There was great difficulty in getting a supply of tea-plants and the necessary workmen to instruct the Indian natives in preparing the article; but by steady perseverance all obstacles were surmounted, and the experiment grew into a successful reality. The English market now derives a large supply of tea from India, and it is steadily growing in favor. The Dutch government introduced the tea-culture into Java, and with great success. The Java teas have become popular in Holland, and a few cargoes of

them have been sold in England at satisfactory prices. Attempts have been made at cultivating tea in North America, but thus far they have failed. It is easy enough to raise the tea-plant in certain portions of the United States, but the fatal weakness of the scheme is in the cost of labor for manipulating the article and preparing it for market. There is a vast amount of hand-work necessary; and no American or European country can compete with Asia in the cheapness of labor, nor is likely to do so for a long time to come. America is not destined to be a rival of China as a tea-growing country; but it is otherwise with Japan, India, and Java. The English are confidently looking forward to the time when they can leave China out in the cold and draw their entire supply of tea from India; and from present indications the date is not very far in the future.

Figures are sometimes dry reading, and therefore I give warning at this point that some units and tens are coming. Those

who don't like them may jump a few paragraphs, and those who can stand the infliction may read straight along as though nothing had happened. The Customs Department of China has published elaborate and careful statistics of the foreign trade of the country, and from these statistics many interesting facts may be gleaned. The trade of a single port will be sufficient for purposes of illustration, and so we will consider that of Shanghai. In 1871, the total foreign imports into Shanghai were valued at 13,245,000 taels (a tael is worth \$1.33 $\frac{1}{3}$), while the native exports to foreign countries for the same year were 16,617,000 taels. In 1872 these figures were 9,063,000 imports and 18,088,000 exports; in 1873 they were respectively 7,500,000 and 19,675,000; in 1874, 8,202,000 and 15,650,000; in 1875, 10,500,000 and 17,000,000; while in 1876 they were 13,000,000, against 25,000,000. It will be observed that the balance is largely in favor of Shanghai and against the foreigner. In other ports of China, par-

ticularly at Canton and Foochow, the balance against him is even greater than at Shanghai, and shows no sign of diminishing immediately. Twenty years ago there was a much larger balance than at present, and it was no wonder that the native merchants grew fat and sleek. Their profits were large, and competition was less active than to-day. The foreign merchant in the China trade was also able to show a handsome return at the end of each year, and sometimes he made colossal profits on a single operation. Times have changed since then, and the most of the merchants will assure you that the business has fallen into the sere and yellow leaf.

England has the largest share of the trade of China; she took the lead when the country was opened to commerce, and has managed to maintain it. The entrances and clearances of British steamers at Shanghai for a recent year were 1029, and of American ships for the same period 821. (These include the American steamers en-

gaged in the coasting trade, and also British steamers in the same employment.) Of sailing-vessels there were 414 British entrances and clearances, against 211 American; the totals of steamers and sailing-vessels were 1443 British and 1032 American—the former with an aggregate of 1,087,605 tons, and the latter with 697,283 tons. The average tonnage per ship is greater for British than for American commerce, as one can readily perceive by an analysis of the above figures. In the same year there were 190 German vessels of 109,108 tons, 79 French vessels of 114,173 tons, and 93 Japanese of 101,582 tons. The French have the largest average tonnage per vessel: this fact is due to the great size of the mail steamers of the *Compagnie Messageries Maritimes*, which perform a fortnightly service each way between Marseilles and Shanghai. Deduct the 26 entrances and the same number of clearances of these regular steamers, and the French aggregate of 79 for the year is reduced to a small figure.

In the same period there were 14 entrances and clearances of Danish vessels, 8 Dutch, 27 Russian, 89 Spanish, 10 Norwegian, 11 Siamese, and 927 Chinese.

The figures showing the value of the various foreign imports at Shanghai (other than specie) are not especially encouraging to Americans. For the year under consideration, Great Britain is put down for 20,790,000 taels (I omit the odd thousands); India, for 16,613,000; Singapore and the Straits, 518,000; Australia, 488,000; Japan, 2,939,000; and the United States, 726,000! The total of imports is 47,973,000 taels, and there were re-exports to other Chinese ports to the value of 34,968,000 taels, leaving a net value for Shanghai of 13,000,000 taels. Opium stands at the head of the list of foreign imports, and next to opium we have cotton piece-goods. Opium is not our affair, and therefore we will not stop to figure upon it; but we have something to say about articles of cotton manufacture.

Of gray shirtings there are 5,360,000

pieces, and of plain white shirtings 605,000. There are 2,963,000 pieces of T-cloths, while of drills there are 918,000 pieces of English make, 99,000 Dutch, and 191,000 American. There are 224,000 pieces of English jeans, 27,000 Dutch, and 7000 American. For sheetings the English are credited with 31,000 pieces, and the Americans with 83,000. Other cotton goods are imported, but they are of no special consequence to us, and I omit the figures concerning them.

VIII.

SOMETHING FOR AMERICAN MERCHANTS.

HERE is a trade which we should look after more carefully than we have been looking the past few years. Formerly we had our share of it, but it was lost during the American civil war, and has never been regained. There is an old maxim that "all's fair in love and war." That it is a most pernicious one, and has been made the excuse for countless dishonorable actions, I will not stop to prove. Evidently there are many persons who believe that all is fair in commerce, if we may judge by certain transactions in the Far East. I have elsewhere alluded to the Opium War and the noble principles upon which England based her conduct in that affair; hardly less dishonorable has been the course of British mer-

chants in respect to the trade in cotton fabrics in China and Japan. Our war gave them an advantage for the time, and they filled the Eastern markets with their fabrics. This was all right and proper, but far otherwise was their conduct after our war was over and we again entered the commercial field. American goods were popular, and the English dealers found it to their interest to put American counterfeits into the Chinese market. They imitated the trade-marks of the American mills, and to all outward appearances the goods were the same. But they were heavily weighted with sizing; and, though of good appearance, they could not endure washing even for a single occasion. In this way the American reputation was greatly injured; and, furthermore, as the counterfeits were far cheaper than the genuine, the Chinese merchants were led to believe that the English houses could sell American goods cheaper than could the Americans themselves.

While in China and Japan I examined

goods of the above description, and had the testimony of merchants, customs officials, and others in support of the assertion concerning the frauds in the trade. Several years ago the matter was called to the attention of the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce, and this led to a quiet investigation of the practices of the English cotton manufacturers. It was found that the mills at Manchester (England) were using seven or eight times as much sizing as the American mills, and that a skilled chemist was a necessary functionary in a well-conducted English factory. The following was the result of washing out the size, etc., from drills:

<i>Weight in Gray.</i>	<i>Weight Washed.</i>	<i>Loss.</i>	<i>Loss Per Cent.</i>
15 lbs.	9 lbs. 10 oz.	5 lbs. 6 oz.	or 35.83
14 lbs. 14 oz.	9 lbs. 6 oz.	5 lbs. 8 oz.	or 36.97
14 lbs. 4 oz.	8 lbs. 12 oz.	5 lbs. 8 oz.	or 38.60
15 lbs. 10 oz.	9 lbs. 9 oz.	6 lbs. 1 oz.	or 38.80
15 lbs. 2 oz.	9 lbs. 5 oz.	5 lbs. 13 oz.	or 38.34
15 lbs.	12 lbs. 2 oz.	2 lbs. 14 oz.	or 19.17
—or an average of loss of $34\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.			

A similar fraud was practised on shirt-

ings; pieces that weighed $7\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. being weighted to the extent of three pounds, so as to make them sell at $10\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. Now look at the standing of genuine American cottons as compared with the above. Twenty-five pieces of American goods were washed with the following result: Weight of 40-yard pieces in brown, as put up for export, 14 lbs.; weight of same after washing, $13\frac{1}{4}$ to $13\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.; percentage of loss by washing, $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 5 per cent.

A comparison of the above statistics, taking English drills per invoices of January, 1874 (the sterling price reduced to its equivalent in American gold), and American drills (the currency price reduced to gold at $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. premium), shows the following result: If the English manufacturer made his drills, as the American, with only $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 5 per cent. (say 5 per cent.) sizing, it would increase the price per yard in gold to 11.24 cents, while the price of the American drill on the same basis is 9.33 cents—difference in favor of the American

drill, 1.91 cents. Or, again: If the American manufacturer should degrade his standard to the English, using $34\frac{5}{8}$ -per-cent. sizing, the American price would be per yard, gold, 6.54 cents, while the English price on the same basis is 7.87 cents—difference in favor of the American drill, 1.33 cents.

Since these frauds were first exposed we have regained a little of the China trade in cottons; but the tricks of the British merchants are not generally known, and they still have the lion's share of the business. More persistence on our part is absolutely necessary to secure justice to ourselves and protect the untutored Chinese against imposition.

At Canton the trade statistics make a far worse showing for America than at Shanghai. During one year there were 1749 British vessels entered and cleared at Canton, against 97 German and 14 American. But it should be explained that a large number of Chinese *lorchas*, or small coasting-ships, trade between Hong-Kong and Canton un-

der British licenses, and thus the number of British entries and clearances is largely increased. Furthermore, the most of the American ships in the trade of Southern China discharge and load at Hong-Kong and do not enter any strictly Chinese port. But even with all this in consideration, we are far behind what we should be in our commerce with the more southerly portion of the Celestial Empire.

IX.

STEAM COMMUNICATION WITH CHINA.

UNTIL the year 1867, we had no regular steam communication with China. Our trade was conducted in sailing-ships, and famous were the voyages made in the olden time, when the white-winged clippers flew homeward with their cargoes of tea and silk. Steam is rapidly driving the sailing-ship from the ocean. In her earnest encouragement of steam-lines in all parts of the world, England has shown far more shrewdness than we have. The completion of the Pacific Railway and the establishment of an American steam-line to Japan and China occurred in the same decade with the opening of the Suez Canal. The routes of commerce with the Far East were thus materially changed both for the Old World and the New. Formerly we were obliged

to send our ships by the way of Cape Horn or the Cape of Good Hope, and in either case it was necessary to cross the equator twice, and undergo all the risks and discomforts of tropical heat. A hundred days and more were required for the voyage from China to New York; now it may be made in thirty days, and even less. We have established a new route of travel and commerce, and every year it is growing in popularity. Merchandise can travel rapidly as well as passengers, and the New-Yorker may sip his morning or evening tea in little more than a month from the day the leaves were plucked from the plants on Chinese hill-sides.

There are now two steam-lines, well equipped and well managed, between San Francisco, on the one hand, and China and Japan, on the other. From each end of the line there is a departure every two weeks, and the voyage across the Pacific may be set down as the longest and pleasantest in the world. The steamers carry out assort-

ed cargoes of American products, including trade-dollars, quicksilver, cotton goods, machinery, ginseng, weighing apparatus, flour, borax, and other things. They bring in return tea, silk, porcelain, and general merchandise, the latter consisting mainly of curiosities from China and Japan. There is always great haste to deliver the new crop of tea, as this article deteriorates rapidly with age; and the sooner it can be put in the market, the better it is for the interest of all concerned. When a tea-laden steamer arrives at San Francisco, a railway train is drawn up at her side, and the chests are transferred as rapidly as possible from ship to cars. In a few hours the work is complete, and the train whizzes away to the eastward. It has the right of way over everything but a passenger train, and its halts are so arranged as to lose the least possible amount of time. It climbs the Sierras and winds through the snow-sheds; rattles over the long tangents that stretch like sunbeams across the alkali plains of

Utah and Nevada; it winds through the billowy green carpet of Weber and Echo cañons; it ascends the long slope of the Rocky Mountains, and halts a moment for breath at the water-shed of the Atlantic and Pacific, more than eight thousand feet above the level of their ever-restless waves. Then down the mountains, and through the broad valley of the Missouri, across the fertile prairies of the Mississippi, passing the lakes and crossing the Alleghanies, the train comes at length to the banks of the Hudson, and halts within sight of the spires of New York, only twelve days after it has bidden farewell to the Golden Gate.

The two steam-lines traversing the great ocean are known as the Pacific Mail and the Occidental and Oriental. Once on a time they were hostile, but of late years they have been harmonious as two little birds in a correspondingly little nest. They make their departures alternately, and a passage certificate for the one line is good for the other. The ships are thoroughly adapted to

the service, and altogether we have reason to be proud of them. I look back with feelings of pleasure to my voyage from San Francisco to China, and unhesitatingly pronounce it one of the most agreeable trips I have ever made on the great water. In a dissertation on China, it may not be out of place to say something about the journey to the Flowery Land.

X.

A VOYAGE OVER THE PACIFIC.

PRECISELY at noon, the time appointed for our departure, the lines were cast off, and the good ship *Oceanic* steamed away from the dock and out into the Bay of San Francisco. On the eastern horizon Monte Diá-bolo smiled a farewell as he reflected the mid-day sun of an unclouded sky; and beyond him we could see, in fancy, the snow-clad Sierras stretching their jagged outline to north and south. Westward rose the sand-dunes of the peninsula, disappearing year by year beneath the rapidly growing metropolis of the Pacific coast; and beyond it lay the great ocean, five thousand miles in width. Our ship turned her prow as we swept through the waters; the land seemed to break and the hills to separate, that we might go unrestrained on our way; and as

we swept past the frowning fortress of Alcatraz, and looked beyond, the Golden Gate opened its broad portal and gave us passage to the sea. It is not a narrow, tortuous channel, with rocks and reefs and sand-bars threatening myriad dangers to the navigator, but a wide opening, where a dozen ships may enter side by side. What thousands upon thousands have passed this gateway to enter or to leave the land of gold! What bright hopes have been borne upon these dancing waters, many to be more than realized, and many, alas! to be shattered among the rugged mountains and by the banks of California's turbid streams!

North and south we see a rocky coastline, which softens and mellows as we leave it farther and farther behind us; here and there along its dark front we see the white stipple made by a farm-house or other habitation, and occasionally a sharp cliff stands out more boldly than its fellows. We drop our pilot, the ladder is drawn in, the gangway is closed, and the last link which bound

us to America is broken. Before we are fairly outside the headlands of San Francisco Bay, the steamer lays her course for Cape King, at the entrance of Jeddo Gulf, five thousand miles away. Not an island, not a rock, not a reef, stands between us and our far-off destination. We are not to be cramped for sea-room.

The shore fades, the sun declines in the heavens, and the day and the land disappear together. As the great globe of fire sinks beneath the waves, it is exactly in front of our prow; the light trembles upon the waters, and a long gleam of shining gold marks the division of sea and sky. Thus day after day we witness the sunset, and seemingly we are no nearer to it at the last than at the first. Not a sail greets our eyes for more than four thousand miles; we are a speck upon the waste of waters circling round; and there is nothing to greet our eyes save the billowy blue beneath us, or the azure dome above. As our first morning breaks upon us, it reveals a horizon of waves,

and, scan it closely as we will, we can descry naught else. We are "off soundings," as the sailors say, and the ocean presents its bluest of "blue waters," to use again a marine phrase. The depth of the Pacific is not well known, as it has been only slightly sounded, but enough has been ascertained to make us certain that it is no small matter. A verdant passenger is informed that land is not more than two miles away. When he has strained his eyes to the utmost in all directions in the vain endeavor to discover it, he is told that he can find it directly under the keel. "Don't be too sure of that," he replies; "none of us know how deep the Pacific is, and it is just possible that the land you speak of is five or six miles away." We cannot combat his theory, and decline to discuss a subject where neither side has any facts upon which to base an argument.

I have spoken of the blue sky; let it not be supposed that the heavens were at all times clear and unclouded. On the contrary, more than three fourths of our voyage

we have had clouds and fogs in abundance both day and night, and there have been four or five days at a time when we have not been favored with even the faintest glimpse of the sun. At times the clouds are dull and leaden; at others they are sombre, and drop down rain; again they come so close that our tall masts can almost pierce them, while an hour later they rise far above, like a gigantic dome. Now they are light and fleecy, as though the sheep of the celestial regions had cast off their wealth of wool; and again they form long feathers and bits of spray that stretch above and around us, and make what the sailors call "a mackerel sky." The fog often lies thick around us, but, apart from its humidity, which drives us below, it has no terrors like its Atlantic kindred. A fog on the banks of Newfoundland is an affair of more or less danger; it conceals icebergs, against which we may be dashed and destroyed, and it renders the chance of a collision with steamers or sailing-craft an easy

possibility. The history of transatlantic navigation is full of sad incidents whose primal cause was the perpetual fog that hangs over a portion of the great highway. The half-dozen steamers that have disappeared, never to be heard from, doubtless met their fate beneath this pall of descended cloud. But on this broad ocean the fog is of no consequence beyond the trifling one I have mentioned, and its hindrance to solar and lunar observations. The currents of the Pacific are northward, and there is a steady flow of water through Behring Strait into the Polar Sea. Consequently there are no icebergs to stand in our way, and there is little danger of a collision with another vessel on a route where not a sail is to be seen during the whole voyage. Imagine the four Middle States of the Union to be one vast field; a dozen men walking through it at random would have more chance of running against each other than would the ships navigating the Pacific of coming within speaking and seeing dis-

tance. The possibilities of collision in the fog are less than those of the earth's destruction by a comet within the next twenty years.

The ocean and the sky are an interesting study. On a clear day the water is a deep blue—almost black, indeed, especially when we look down into its depths. But when clouds veil the heavens, the water is blue no longer, or rather its blue seems to be tinged with gray, as though reflecting the color of the dome above it. There is a perpetual variation of light and shade and color on the dancing waves; and sometimes at sunset the western horizon burns and glows like that of Egypt, and the purple and yellow and crimson spread outward and upward, and stretch a band of burnished gold along the distant water. Sometimes the sea is of a lake-like stillness, but such occasions are rare; more often it is in motion, now undulating in a long slowly pulsating swell, and now broken into white-capped waves that rise and fall with rhythmic reg-

ularity. For us it is not lashed into tempests : our voyage is a summer one, and the monotony has not been varied by a gale. In winter it is otherwise, and the Pacific frequently belies its name by tossing the mariner as wildly as he has ever been tossed on the Atlantic. Had Magellan sailed in this latitude in December or January, he would have given another name to the sea he christened Peaceful.

I said we had no sight of sail ; I forget. On two or three occasions we have seen the ocean covered for hours, far as the eye could reach, with the sails of Portuguese men-of-war. Thousands of them have been run down by us, and we made no note of them on our log. Did you know the little kingdom of Portugal possessed such a navy ? and would you suppose that the captain of the *Oceanic* would so cruelly sink the craft of a peaceful nation ? Well, this ship, with such a portentous name, is a marine production of the family of mollusks, combining in some degree the peculiarities

of snail, jelly-fish, and sail-boat. Below the water he has a thin shell enclosing a jelly-like body, and above the water he carries a thin membrane stretched between two supports, and performing the duty of a sail. He carries no clearance or other papers, and, spite of his name, is not under the protection of his Most Gracious Majesty the King of Portugal. Consequently there is no danger of international troubles or indirect damages growing out of the destruction which our ship has wrought among these helpless craft. They are of no consequence, as even the sea-birds refuse to eat them, and what a sea-bird will decline to devour may be set down as inedible. The birds follow us all the way from the Golden Gate to the Bay of Jeddo. They can be seen at almost any hour of the day flying gracefully through the air or taking a temporary rest in the waves behind us. They are on the lookout for edibles from the table, and are not particular whether they come from the cabin or the steerage. How or when they sleep

is a mystery, as they do not come on board, and the steamer does not wait for them to take "forty winks," or any other number, during the still watches of the night. We march on and on, and the engines do not once stop from the time we leave the Golden Gate till we are in sight of Yokohama, eighteen days later.

There are several varieties of birds, some little larger than a swallow, while others equal a full-grown duck. One of the little fellows flew on board one day, and was caught. He greatly resembled a young duck, save in the bill, which was shaped like a chicken's. He was placed in a tub of water, where he swam around quite unconcerned, not attempting to fly, and doubtless wondering what had made the ocean so small in such a little while. After half an hour's confinement he was thrown overboard, where he chattered and shrieked a greeting to his comrades, and probably told them of the wonderful things he had seen.

Our ship is British, officers are mostly so,

crew is Chinese, and passengers are of varied origin. The latter are not numerous—seven in all in the cabin—and they include American, English, French, Japanese, Hindostanee, Spanish, Chinese, German, and perhaps one or two other nationalities. You may think the above statement a trifle incorrect, but you would not if you could see how one person represents three countries, and another two at least. The cabin is so large and the number so small that there is no crowding; and though everybody is civil, there is not much chance among so many tastes and languages that we can be congenial. One passenger—he of the three nationalities—is on his way to a fortune. He was born in India, of a mixed parentage, and a decade or so ago he ran away from home. He went to California, where he landed with a cash capital of forty cents, and for years had a sharp struggle with poverty. On some occasions he went two whole days without food, and for months he lived upon one meal a day, pur-

chased at the low price of ten cents. He struggled bravely, and at last found himself comfortably off, possessing a small house, a wife, a child, and a permanent situation bringing him two thousand dollars a year. Several times he wrote home, but as no response came to his letters he concluded that the paternal wrath had been visited upon him and blotted his name from the family record. He became an American citizen, and ceased to think of India.

But one day his brother comes to San Francisco in a ship from Australia, and at a venture he advertises for our polyglot passenger. He has done the same in London and Melbourne, in Liverpool and Sydney, in Glasgow and Calcutta, and in a dozen other places, but all to no purpose. This time the advertisement falls on good ground, and the brothers meet after a separation of twelve years. "I have sought you all over the world," says the new-comer. "I have worked my passage from city to city; and whenever I could make any money, I have

carefully saved it to spend in advertising for you. Our father died nine years ago, and left half a million dollars. We never received a letter from you, and had no knowledge of your whereabouts. The estate is tied up in the courts, and nothing could be done till we found where you, the eldest son, lived, if alive, or brought proof of your death. For eight years I have been wandering over the world in search of you, and what a relief it is to find you !”

The heir who was lost and is found tells me with tears in his eyes of his brother's devotion, and says, “Though I am entitled by the law to the whole estate, I think he deserves a good share, and he shall have the half of every dollar I receive. I will stay in India just long enough to close my affairs, and then I will return to America. It has been kind to me when I was in distress ; I have become a citizen and married and settled there, and want no better home.”

One day is much like another. We rose,

dressed, ate, read, talked, wrote, and slept yesterday, and we rise, dress, eat, read, talk, write, and sleep to-day. No morning papers, no war news, and no politics; the story-tellers are soon told out, and the singers soon sing themselves songless. On Sundays we have service, and afterwards all the officers and crew are mustered for inspection. With a force composed partly of English and partly of Chinese, the inspection can fairly be called *la revue des deux mondes*. The firemen, coal-passers, sailors, waiters, etc., are Chinese; all officers of whatever grade, from the butcher and poultry chief upwards, are English or American. I except from this list of officers the boatswain, who is Chinese—a strong, muscular fellow with an intelligent face, a bright eye, an ear that understands English, and a mouth that gives orders in Chinese with great rapidity.

The sailors are in general athletic fellows, with bronzed faces and strong arms; they are said to be excellent for ordinary work, but unreliable in times of excitement or

danger. They do not come to service in the cabin, but have a chapel or joss-house of their own, where they worship after the dictates of their consciences or the customs of their fathers. Fire-crackers have a prominent place among their religious paraphernalia, and some of their devotional meetings are opened with explosions intended to wake up their deity and secure his attention. Whenever the ship passes the spot where the *Japan* was burned and five hundred Chinese lost their lives, a special service is held in memory of those whose bones are bleaching beneath the waves. Quantities of food are thrown overboard for the sustenance of the unhappy spirits doomed to a subaqueous residence forever. When Chinese die at sea, they are not buried in the deep, but their bodies are embalmed and carried to land. The Chinese have a great horror of sepulture elsewhere than in the Flowery Kingdom, and for this reason every Celestial in America has arranged that, living or dead, he shall not remain among

us. John has his superstitions, as we have ours, and he is the last man in the world to give them up.

On the twentieth day we see the white cone of Fusi-Yama, the sacred mountain of Japan. A few hours later we pass Cape King, and enter the Bay of Jeddo, up which we steam till we drop anchor in front of Yokohama, five thousand miles from the Golden Gate. From Yokohama the steamer proceeds to Hong-Kong, twelve hundred miles farther, and completes the long voyage.

XI.

SIGHTS IN CANTON.

AT Hong-Kong we are only ninety miles from Canton, the best-known city in China, for the reason that it has been longest open to the outer world, and has been visited by more travellers than any other. It is generally considered the most attractive and picturesque—an opinion I most heartily endorse. The Cantonese are a gay, cheerful people, and though ever on the look-out for good bargains, they do not act as if the pursuit of gain were the sole object of their lives. In Shanghai and other Northern cities the shopkeepers are often uncivil, and not infrequently make a positive refusal to show their goods unless assured that you will be a *bona-fide* purchaser, and are not indulging in a simple “look-see.” A Canton shopkeeper does other-

wise: you may look through his establishment and take up an hour or two of his time; and, whether you purchase much, little, or nothing, he never forgets his politeness, and bows you away at your departure with an intimation on his countenance that your visit has given him the greatest possible pleasure, and he regrets its hasty termination. Canton beggars and the Canton poor in general seem less unhappy than their brethren of the North, and even the pigs and the dogs are in better condition, and do not appear to consider life as one of the vanities.

Some miles before we reach Canton, as we ascend the Pearl River from Hong-Kong, we see the walls of the city straggling over the hills, and rest our eyes upon tall pagodas which rise like watch-towers. Somehow a pagoda seems well adapted to the Chinese landscape—it fits into place exactly; but you cannot help thinking how incongruous it would appear in Europe or America. One of the prettiest in this region

is the pagoda of Whampoa, about ten miles below Canton; it is moss and bush grown and ivy-twined, and altogether has an air of antiquity that inclines you to remove your hat as you pass. A famous edifice in Canton is the five-storied pagoda which stands on a hill overlooking the city on one side, and a long stretch of cemeteries and gardens on the other. As a work of architecture this pagoda is a lamentable failure, as it is little else than a huge building five stories in height, and possessing broad balconies at each story. The elevation and the view from the upper balcony make the attraction, and certainly the picture is a charming one. The great city with its million inhabitants lies at your feet, and you look down upon acres and acres of houses with tiled roofs and projecting eaves, and hear the hum of myriad voices borne on the air like the sigh of the breeze through the forest. The streets are so narrow that you can hardly see them at all, and you might almost think that the

area below you was one vast pavement of earthen tiles. We see pagodas and temples rising like islands from the waters of a lake, but more numerous than these are tall buildings of brick and stone towering high above their neighbors, and recalling to mind the grain-elevators of Buffalo and Chicago, or the huge warehouses that line the banks of the harbor of New York.

“What are those tall buildings?” we ask; and though we know we are in a land of surprises, and are prepared to hear everything with complacency, we cannot avoid a slight elevation of the eyebrows at the answer to our query. “Those tall buildings are pawnbroking shops,” our guide explains. “In the upper story gold and jewelry and other costly things are stored; on the next floor are silks and furs; and the farther down you go, the cheaper are the articles stored there. The buildings are made high so that thieves cannot get into them.”

The number and size of these establish-

ments indicate an enormous business, and we are quite prepared for the statement that the Chinese are liberal patrons of the house of the three balls. In winter a Chinese keeps his summer clothes in pawn, and in summer he thus disposes of his winter garments. How he manages the *mauvais quart d'heure* of the change of wardrobe, I am unable to say, but it may be that an array of dressing-rooms in the shop would solve the mystery. I went through one of these shops, and up to its roof: thousands upon thousands of parcels and packages were stowed away on the various floors, all ticketed and labelled in such a way that any desired package could be readily found. The pawnbrokers may charge three per cent. a month on short loans, and two per cent. on long ones, and altogether they do not appear to drive a losing business. They are as keen as their kindred of Chatham Street or the Bowery. China is the oldest nation of the world, and claims an origin in the mythological epoch, but in all her

history there is no record of a pawnbroker lending more than its value upon any article offered to him.

The genius who praised the providence which ordained that great rivers should run past large cities would be delighted with the situation of Canton. The Pearl River is a fine stream, and its numerous branches and tributaries render a large area of country accessible by boats. The largest ocean vessels must anchor at Whampoa, but ships and steamers of medium size may ascend to the city and anchor in front of it.

We arrive by a steamer from Hong-Kong, and as we approach the wharf it seems almost a miracle that we do not sink a dozen or more of the boats that are thickly dotted upon the water. We think all the boats of Canton must be out for an airing, but as we look along either bank we see rows upon rows of boats of many kinds lying there; and if we go around the bend and down any of the creeks and canals, we find more boats, and more, and more. Then we re-

member the famous boat population of Canton, and that whole families live, year in and year out, upon the river. As we look into the boats we find the statement verified, as at least half of the rowers are women, and we see children of all ages lying or crawling about the decks, or in little pitholes at the stern. The smaller children are tended by the larger ones; and if there are none of the latter, the little ones are secured by a cord, whose other end is attached to the boat or to a small log. If the urchin falls overboard, he swims as naturally as a puppy; but I was told that these babies, left to themselves, rarely tumble from the deck or meet other mishaps. They seem to understand that they can receive no attention, and therefore do not expect or demand it. A boat approaches, rowed by two women, each of whom has a child strapped to her back. This is the usual mode of carrying infants in China and Japan, and the babies seem to take to it very kindly.

The number of the boat population of Canton is stated at sixty thousand, and I should think the figure an under rather than an over estimate. These people are born on the boats, and they live and die there, and, so far as I could see, they were as happy and careless as any others of the Cantonese. The captain of the steamer secured us a boat belonging to a woman known as "American Susan," and we engaged it for the time of our stay in Canton at fifty cents a day. Susan was a bright and not overhandsome woman, about four feet high, and carried a nose so *retroussé* that it threatened to pierce the base of her forehead. She was captain, and had a crew consisting of her sister, a hired woman, and a hired man. She spoke English fairly, and admitted the possession of a husband, who "hab got pigeon" (had business) in Canton. The men of the boat population go to serve as sailors in junks or on foreign ships, and many of them have migrated to America and other lands.

The only hotel at Canton is on the island of Ho-nan, directly opposite the city, not far from a famous Buddhist monastery. We make a visit to this establishment, and find an enclosure of temples and gardens, approached by a massive gateway, which reminds us of the pylon of an Egyptian temple. The monks are at their evening meal, which consists of rice and fish for the first course, fish and rice for the second course, and bowls of rice with bowls of fish for the third course. They appear to live well; and as there are four hundred of them, the temple must be well endowed, or the visitors very liberal. In one enclosure are the sacred pigs, very fat and very lazy, but not exhaling an odor of sanctity. Close by is an enclosure of sacred ducks, chickens, and doves, but I could not see that they were unlike the profane birds of similar species in other lands. The monks believe in cremation, and we are shown the ovens where the remains of the good men are reduced to ashes. Nobody was undergoing calcination at

the time, and we contented ourselves with the cold ovens, and the rows of jars containing the ashes, which had been carefully gathered and labelled like so many pots of preserves.

For our visit to the city we engaged sedan-chairs and a guide, and thus thread the narrow and tortuous ways for which Canton is famous. The streets are from four to ten feet in width, and the best of them rarely have a breadth beyond eight feet. Wheeled vehicles are out of the question, and so all merchandise is carried by coolies, and all people who move otherwise than by pedestrianism. Our bearers walk rapidly, and it is a wonder that no accidents occur, as the streets are full of people, and not infrequently we meet other sedans, and are obliged to hug the wall closely to pass without accident. Over our heads are hundreds of perpendicular signs, on which the shopkeepers inscribe, not only their names, but certain mottoes or phrases by which their establishments are known. One is

“Flowery Happiness,” another “Ten Thousand Pleasures,” another “Content and Gratitude,” while a fourth bears the legend “Hope is perennial, and promises Paradise.” Considerable taste is shown in the painting of the signs, and the view of a Cantonese street is a novel, pleasing, and picturesque sight. The shop fronts are all open, and the merchants sit in calm contemplation, confident that fortune will send them customers whom they will handle to advantage.

In the shops we find a tempting array of what are known to commerce as Canton goods. Crape and silks are in bewildering profusion, and of a cheapness that makes us wish to purchase the entire lot. Shelves upon shelves are covered with lacquer boxes and other ware, and again we are tempted and turn away sorrowfully. Ivory and sandal-wood carvings are abundant, and it is surprising to see what shapes the tusk of the elephant or walrus can be made to take in the hands of the Chinese carver. Most of

us have seen ivory balls one within another, and have wondered how the work was done. There is no mystery about it, and we see the balls in the hands of the carvers in nearly every shop we visit. Holes are first bored to the centre of the ball, and the lateral cuttings are then made by graduated bits, which require to be held carefully in place. After the innermost ball is separated from the rest of the ivory, it is turned at will, and the design wrought upon it, and then the next one is taken, and after it the next. Card-cases, fans, and other things are cut with sharp tools. Sometimes the workman follows a design drawn upon the ivory, and at others he works entirely by the eye. The carvings on sandal-wood are made after the same manner as those upon ivory; but as the material is softer, the work is performed with greater rapidity.

We can spend a great deal of time in the shops, and find something new and interesting at every step. The dealers are never weary of exhibiting their wares, as

they have learned by long experience that the best way to tempt customers is by showing their work and allowing the fullest opportunity of examining it. Porcelain shops are numerous, and there is an enormous quantity of vases and other articles in each establishment, a large portion being specially designed for foreign tastes. The porcelain shops are generally of two stories, and the best goods are kept on the upper floor, where a customer must go to see them. In Canton one finds that nearly every street has its specialty, one being devoted to silk-shops, another to ivory-workers, and another to lacquer-ware or cases of camphor-wood. In this respect the resemblance to Damascus and Cairo is greater than in any other city of China.

We visit several temples, but none have any special attractions. We enter a mandarin's court, where a poor wretch led with a chain, as one might lead a dog, is brought up for sentence. As he crouches before the judge he is awarded twenty blows with the

bamboo, and they are then and there administered. Instruments of torture are piled at the door of the court-room, and a very brief inspection convinces us that in China the way of the transgressor is hard indeed. But it is whispered that justice is tempered with mercy when the culprit or his friends can pay for the latter in its unstrained form; and, meditating on the difference between Chinese customs and our own, we will return to our hotel.

FINIS.



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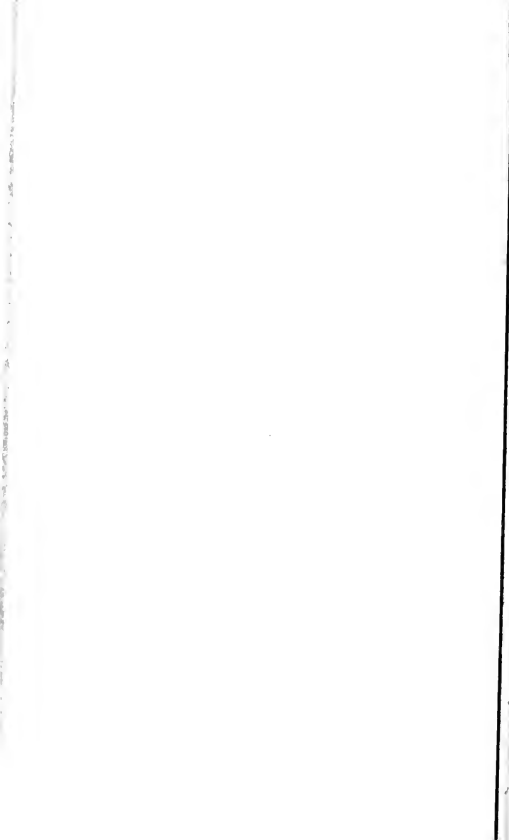
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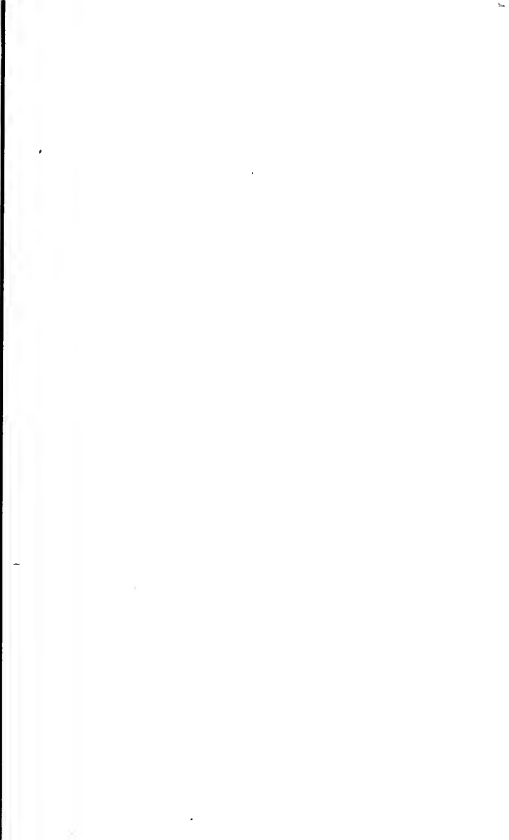
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